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In connection with the 63rd programme

The Parents' Union School

by Rev C. C. Mason

It is great pleasure to me to meet, if not in the flesh,
then in the spirit, people with whom I have had much inter-
course, parents of children who belong to the P.U.S.

I should like to thank them for the faith which has accepted
the conditions of a school run upon ~~usual~~ unusual lines,
a school which discards the tattered school-books which have
passed through the hands of two or three generations of
school children & buys the appointed books on many subjects,
the teaching of which hardly approves itself to their common
sense. But I believe that this faith meets with a royal
reward. The children do exceptionally well when they pass
out of the home schoolroom to the ordinary school; &, mean-
time, they prove themselves charming companions to their
elders, companions with many interests & delights. They do
not find home-life or schoolroom life dull & tiresome. The
schoolroom interests become family interests & subjects of
conversation; everyone is interested in discussing the first
appearance of the willow warbler or the redstart, of the adonis
or purple orchis; everyone has an opinion about Botticelli's

Spring or Van Eyck's Adoration; & I hope that the reading for the last term has revived many old interests in the whole family, has perhaps induced another delightful reading of Miss Austen's novels & a renewed intimacy with her characters, Kingsley, Carlyle, Mazzini, have, no^t doubt, struck a sympathetic chord in many families, conscious of an aching sense of responsibility in these uneasy times; and how good to live again in the atmosphere of the Idylls of the King!

Echoes reach us now & then, such as, "Father is so much interested in Gilbert White's ~~Sett~~ Letters that he is taking that subject himself." People give their children drawings to illustrate their studies in Architecture: a correspondent says, - ~~*****~~ The way my two nine-year-olds have enjoyed Besant's Alfred, pure & unadulterated is amazing." That is the whole point.

We give children books that are books, that is books whose existence is justified by [originality in thought] & by a more or less literary style. Books in which the matter is watered down, compressed or simplified, we abstain from carefully, because children are lovers of intellectual strong

meat. This is curiously illustrated in the practice of narrating, or relating, paragraphs or chapters which have been read, which is as you know a custom of the School.

We always test the value of the books set by the children's narrations; books which are marked by the concentrated thought & easy style which distinguish literature produce narrations full of matter & expressed in good & vigorous English, while the most well-intentioned work of the talky-talky order results in a sentence or two of ill-expressed twaddle.

Has it occurred to you how much this practice of narrating after a single reading implies? Try a chapter of Scott or of Jane Austen, read ~~by~~ through once & then silently narrated, ^{in times of insomnia} to put one to sleep, for example; I think few persons will be satisfied with the result. We find we have left out incidents, telling arguments, bits of descriptions, — have failed to get the general hang of the narrative, & so on. Now, children do this admirably. They read with concentrated attention; the single reading of a long passage puts mere parrot-like repetition out of the question, they use their own words & affect their author's style; & the fact that they read the works of many authors lends to their

general composition an ease & vigour & a fulness of matter ~~which~~
which we elders many well envy.

As some of us live beside our best friends for years & ~~know~~
know mighty little about them until the presence of some
stranger shews them to us in a new aspect, in like manner,
I venture to think that the School has been the means of
revealing many children to their parents. ~~THEY ARE SO YOUNG~~
"I thought The Idylls of the King much too old for them
but I find they delight in the book," we have been told
by more than one mother. But we are not by any means so
superior to the children as we think in matters of intellec-
tual comprehension. They do not know much to be sure, but
they can understand anything that is put to them with direct-
ness & force. Too many details fatigues their minds, but
they take to general principles duly illustrated with
avidity. And indeed they have need to do so for there is ~~not~~
much for them to learn & they have no time to waste upon
twaddle or upon text-books crammed with the mere dust of
learning.

Recognising that knowledge-hunger is as keen as bread-and-butter hunger, we spread their

table with a liberal hand ,endeavouring to introduce them to each sort of knowledge that a rational human being should possess, the knowledge of God through the Bible, the knowledge of men through History, literature, ethics of art, the knowledge of the natural world through nature-study & science: and the response the children make to this liberal curriculum is ~~most~~ delightful & stimulating. But, shew an ordinary schoolmaster or mistress a single term's programme in either of the classes, & you will be told that it is much better for the children to do some three or four subjects well than to run over so much ground, that matter got out of books is mere information, & at that, information derived from so many books must be of a scrappy character. There are, no doubt schoolmasters & mistresses who have considered the nature of knowledge & who understand children's enormous appetite for it. These hold, with Dr Arnold, who says,—"Adjust your proposed amount of reading to your time & inclination; but whether that amount be large or small let it be varied in its kind, & widely varied. If I have

~~Improvement in the human mind, is a constant~~

a confident opinion on any one point connected with the improvement of the human mind, it is on this."

It is satisfactory to have chanced on a justification in the words of so eminent an authority of the principle that has~~¶~~ guided the construction of the [Parents' Union School curriculum] from its first issue to its 63rd; but there is a reason in the nature of things & in the nature of their own minds why children should deal with wide & various knowledge grouped~~¶~~ under the three headings I have indicated. The knowledge of God we know is eternal life, & there is one final source of such knowledge, the Bible itself. Therefore we endeavour to make children familiar with many of the books of the Scriptures & with the words of the text itself. I ^{press the point} do not urge, that this familiarity with Bible English should give them some mastery of English at its best, though it does so no doubt. We know how Ruskin's noble style was, as he himself admits, largely derived from this well of English undefiled. But the training in the speaking & writing of English which the Bible affords is incidental; what we look for is a~~¶~~

steadily widening & increasing knowledge of God brought to a point as it were by a knowledge of our noble liturgy.

The knowledge of man includes a good many headings in our programmes; English History, French History, European History, Literature (both poetry & prose) Morals, Citizenship, Plutarch's Lives, Art Studies, studies in Music & in Language, Modern Languages & Latin. These & kindred subjects ~~will~~ should issue in the just judgment, wide comprehension, strong sense of duty & responsibility & devoted patriotism, the need of which is urged upon us by every national distress.

Sympathy, tenderness, cultivated perceptions, a passionate sense of the beauty & duty of service, are among the equipments for life required in these exacting days; & all of these we aim at imparting by slow degrees, by more & more, through the words of the wise which the children learn to delight in.

We are hardly aware how children lap up lessons of life like a thirsty dog at a water trough because they know without being told that their chief business is to learn how to think & how to live; comment & explanation are usual-

ly distracting. By the way, I think there is one point about which we elders must be careful. It is easy to make children intolerable little prigs by giving a personal bearing to their work. It bad enough to hear a mother ~~say~~ say,—"All the mothers care about in a school is that they shall be well looked after; it's the fathers who want some sort of education for the boys so that they can go into business: but I told these boys that if they want a motor-car, they'll have to work!"

We see the materialism of such a view & are properly shocked, but a child is in a far worse case who suspects that to read about Alcibiades, King Alfred, Sir Galahad, should be to his advantage. The first thing that this School is designed to teach is a love of knowledge for its own sake & this I think the children get; they learn that ~~the~~ last accomplishment of noble minds, to delight in books for themselves, but any hint that a poem or a personage is administered by way of a pill or a poultice, to do him good, is fatal to the slow, still operation of knowledge upon a child's personality.

Another point worthy of attention is that the effect of knowledge is not evidenced by what a person knows, ~~the~~ the store of acquirements he possesses, but only & solely by what a person is. We have all been surprised ~~yet~~ from time to time by the unusual simplicity of some eminent man & we give misplaced admiration to his modesty & reticence. Now reticence is not a great & frank quality; the fact is that the ~~xxxxx~~ man of profound knowledge behaves as he feels; he has no store laid away in secret places: his knowledge has made him what he is & has been to some extent consumed in the process. This does not apply to what is commonly called learning, which is a noble means of attaining knowledge rather than knowledge itself. Learning is stored by the memory & the child ² must learn his tenses & tables & dates, his Latin declension & his French verbs with dogged persistence.

But to mistake learning which, unlike knowledge, is a store that can & must be laid up in the memory, for knowledge itself, is in some sense to mistake shadow for substance. Learning is convenient but knowledge is vital.

Learning is merely acquired information to which the memory gives entertainment but which does not influence the life.

'With all thy getting, get understanding', we are bidden.

~~XXXXXX~~ 'Why will ye not understand?' - is our Lord's repeated demand ~~of the Jews & of ourselves.~~ Now, child or man who reads a book in such a way that his active mind appropriates the thought of the writer & can express it faithfully in his own words, has obtained knowledge, not a store to add to his resources in talk or for examination purposes, but ~~aliment~~ which increases the ~~vigour~~ of his personality. But surely, says someone, a child will get what he wants ~~better~~ from the lips of a teacher who knows how ~~to~~ to explain & to approach him on his own level than from the pages of a book written for his elders. Here is one of the ~~fati~~ties that we as a school exist to combat. For his intellectual diet, the child wants more meat, stronger meat, meat more various, in ~~new~~ quality than any teacher can afford, & he is unfairly dealt with if he is not from the first brought into touch with the great ~~minds~~ through ^{written} their own words, written in their own books.

First hand knowledge is what a child wants if he is to grow thereby. That is why oral lessons & lectures compiled from many books have a stimulating but not a sustaining effect. Now & then, no doubt, we hear a lecture from a man of original mind which is the working out of his own original thought; & such a lecture stands, on the same level as an original book. But can we secure for our children the offices of a score of such lecturers, all of them working day by day on the subject each has most at heart?

Even if we could, the distracting influence of personality ~~and~~ would come between the pupil & the genius who is teaching him at this moment, & the result would ^{tend to} ~~be~~ rather ^{rather} stimulation than knowledge.

We can answer our imaginary critic at every point. It is better for a child to work at many subjects than ^{at} few because children have an inherent need of knowledge on many subjects, & to acquire it is delightful to them. The brain is as ~~and~~ much invigorated by regular happy, various, work as is the physical frame; & the child who learns many things, learns each of them as well as he who learns a few things learns

those few, but the former has the added element of ~~delight~~
in his work. Only one caution is necessary, - a strict
limitation in regard to hours of work. No young scholar
should know what brain fag means; & every school time-table
should be framed so as to secure ample leisure for the
scholar & fitting work at fitting periods.

I think we have disposed of the notion that
books afford only information while the 'lovely lesson'
~~to call~~
imparts knowledge. The third adverse criticism which we
used to hear now & then, that information from many books
must be of a scrappy character, needs no further confutation
than may be had from the examination papers shewn in another
room; - all the papers, bad good & indifferent, sent up at
Christmas, ~~those~~ of the last term are still in the hands of
the examiners. The questions you will see are by no means
easy to answer & are really test questions covering about
one twentieth of the ground prepared. You will find no
howlers, no use of words the meaning of which is not under-
stood, no verbiage employed to cover ignorance. The
~~young~~ children write with curious freshness; their work is

in fact the work of original minds because their own apprehension has been employed throughout. You will notice, too, how active imagination has been in every case, scenes are described with a vigour which testifies to their having ~~been~~ been visualised by the young writer & personages are introduced in such wise that it is evident the children know them & will be rejoiced to meet them again in many an after allusion & ~~study~~ study throughout life. By way of gauging the amount of imagination & concentration the children give to their work let us ask ourselves how would it fare with one of us set to write a scene for acting from some passage~~s~~ in a book once read a couple of months ago, or even to illustrate such a scene by a brush-drawing full of details? You will also, no doubt, notice the free flow of vigorous & direct English, the quite admirable style of most of the children's answers. We can all write well when we~~'~~ are full of our subject & know it well, & therefore, children in this School require no lessons in composition. In the course of time the children read ~~big~~ through quite big books, getting a thorough & deeply interest-

ing knowledge as far as it goes of the subject they are dealing with.

20 min

A long time ago the Pall Mall Gazette published an article headed Education v Culture in which some points are made that are ~~well~~ worth our notice. A contrast is drawn between the ~~new~~ 'College' girl & the 'Society' girl, - "The modern society girl" is probably more conversant at the age of seventeen with the literature & art of the day, as well as with ancient history & its arts, than many a college bred girl; in fact, I can safely affirm that were she to adopt the pose of 'blue stocking', instead of the detached air of insouciant girlhood, & enter upon a passage of arms with one of Girton's or Newnham's graduates, she would very soon make the last named feel that her education had scarcely begun. The society woman so-called, ~~new~~ realises that in cultivating her girls, she must fit them to take their places amongst the greatest minds of the age, train them to be the possible mates of such men as create the world's history, not only of her own, but of any other nation." The writer goes on to ~~new~~ make appreciative remarks about the Parents' Union School & the House of Education

from which it is said "cultured young women, prepared to spread culture among the cultured classes" are sent out year by year. "But it is not necessary to have one of these for one's girls in order to educate them on such lines, for, for a mere 'nothing' one can have the system introduced & adopted into any home, a system which brings joy to the ~~ways~~ hearts of the little ones & satisfaction extraordinary to their elders."

Now, this as a point I wish to speak upon. I should like to compliment untrained governesses working in the school upon the admirable papers their children often turn out, but I should like also to offer a word or two of counsel to mothers. When, 'faultily faultless' papers reach us they are a cause of grave anxiety; unduly perfect work done pretty much in the words of the book, reveal the anxious, strenuous teacher oppressed by the labours of her office who will play upon her pupil's desire to get '100' for a long list of subjects; the children work as strenuously as the teacher, in ~~season~~ & out of season; I am not sure that overtime work is not allowed sometimes! The papers come & the children answer all the questions; if by chance there is a question that they cannot cover, we get letters about it on the ground that the children are losing certain marks which they might have had. I make no doubt that the examinations in these schoolrooms are conducted with integrity; the certificates we require to be sent in should secure that, ^{and} but I am quite sure that in any case parents & teachers are awake to the importance of the education in integrity.

which the papers should afford. What I do fear is that the children are sometimes defrauded of by ~~the~~ ^{namely} far the most valuable part of a term's work; an increased love of knowledge & an increased delight in books.

They have been working throughout the term for marks & not for knowledge; as Ruskin says, - "they cram to pass & not to know, they do pass & they don't know!" I wish we all realised what an enormous thing, what a joyous factor in our lives, ^{is} this delight in knowledge ~~is~~, in knowledge & in the books from which chiefly we derive knowledge. Once parents understood [that mark-hunger & knowledge-hunger] cannot co-exist, public opinion would be brought to bear upon school methods & we should have boys & girls working, not towards the pass which is to finish their school career, but in that education which is to continue all their lives ~~through~~ ^{many} through books & things, as in their school-days; & whose reward is continuous intellectual activity & increasing joy in thinking & knowing, that is to say, a fuller & more satisfying life. This, for the individual, & for the service of the world, a larger, ^{more} _{more} sweeter personality, because people are

effective only in the ratio of their personality. I ~~want~~ venture to hope that England will be the better for the ~~parents~~ Parents' Union School which should train young persons capable of just judgment & willing service.

To return for a moment to the question of marks. If it were possible to keep a record without assigning any sort of marks we should certainly do so; but it is important that parents should know when a child falls below the average of his age & class. When this is the record on the report we find that parents are quick to take warning; the faults are remedied & the child is brought up to par in quite a short time. When the work in any subject is quite satisfactory for the scholar's age & class, '100' is assigned, a mark fairly easy of attainment to obtain because it does not denote comparison with others but simply the value of the scholar's own work judged by a common standard, an unusually high one I think.

Sometimes parents express a wish for a class list because they want to know how their children compare with others. Such a comparison is really implied in the marks parents

may be satisfied that their children are doing very well indeed if the term's report is satisfactory.

But that children should be imbued with a feverish desire to get above this one & that ,to take so many places in the term,should have,in fact ,the principle of emulation put before them instead of the love of knowledge,would do away with the peculiar value of the School,for we exist chiefly to secure that children shall love knowledge for its own sake.

But practical parents need not be uneasy;children who have been conscientiously taught in the School do exceedingly well afterwards; & it is curious how ~~what~~ one may call the ethics of their early education cling to them. A lady wrote the other day of her son who was in the School thirteen years ago & had since had rather a distinguished career at Public School & College; but the odd thing was it never occurred to him to revise his reading. I think his mother said ~~now~~ she suggested he should do so for his degree & he replied that he had never thought of that. That is why early habits of work are ~~xxxxxxxx~~ so important,they cling to us through

life; & that again is why it is important that children should get in touch with a wide range of subjects, because I believe it could be proved that people care in after life for those subjects only to which they were duly introduced as children. X

I hope you will not think that I take undue advantage of the fact that I am (by proxy) in the pulpit for the nonce, if I discuss a few points that I should like to make clear. X The Hon. Org. Sec. of the P.N.E.U. outdid herself on one occasion by making a brilliant discovery. She found out that people can't read! that it is useless to provide them with printed matter for they only get the vaguest idea of what is meant to be conveyed. Only this morning I received a letter from a lady who tells me that she & her governess, - were feeling that in the Parents' Union School, everything was arranged for the teacher, nothing for the child to do' !! This lady properly feels that children should not depend too much on their teacher but should work alone. X Now the whole object of the school is to secure that children should work for themselves, should

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deal with their books, drawings, etc., with very little help from the teacher & few oral lessons. This is what makes it possible for one governess to work ^{with} two or three children while the others are ~~not~~ learning by rote, but studying, ~~know~~ 'reading', in the sense in which a 'varsiy man' reads'.

If a child is to ~~get~~ on with his education all his life, he must begin to work for himself in the way of getting knowledge, of dealing with his own books. The teacher it is true has important functions, chief among them, to see that the children know &, next, to show quiet sympathy in their interest in the delightful things they learn. ~~knows~~ Interest, concentration, if not universal, are very general among scholars who get enough to do, not only with their hands but especially with their brains. (There is no occasion for the teacher to resort to 'Miss Honeyman's' Dramatic Method as expounded in Punch.) The interest is there in the knowledge itself, but the teacher must share this interest actively or her ~~work~~ pupils become lethargic. Now, although it is delightful, it is not an easy thing to keep up the alertness of mind necessary to accompany even one class through a morning's work. X This is why the House

of Education governesses do not take what is called 'entire charge'. Work is not the easier but the more difficult because there is only one child to teach; & to be with a single child all day long is a greater strain than even a cottage mother bears; besides, the constant companionship of one person is an undue strain on the child. All this is the more true, the more enthusiastic the teacher & the more delightful the work. But people are beginning to understand that the education of young children is as important as that of their elder brothers & sisters, indeed, more important because the years from six to ten when 'a nice girl from the village' is often entrusted with the education of the children, practically decide the intellectual & moral status of the future man or woman.

~~This brings me to the question of the books used in the School & I should like to thank all the parents of children in the School for their extraordinary appreciation of the books we use, which is the more welcome because the selection of these is a long & difficult, & never ending task.~~ ~~ANONYMOUS~~ It is a curious thing

to say, when there are hundreds of text-books on each of the subjects of study taken up in the school, that there would seem to be but the one right book, & that is long to seek; but the difficulty of finding the right book is an experience common to all students. We in England have inherited a curious parsimony in the matter of books. Being by nature conservative people, I suppose this particular meanness has remained with us since the days when manuscript books were too costly for the schoolboy's use; & that is why, as Ascham tells us, ^{his boy} he had to learn at second-hand, from the lips of his master, what he should have got direct from the author.

Books are cheap enough now for the slenderest purse, but it is astonishing how small a sum annually even educated people in easy circumstances will spend at their book-sellers! This inherited parsimony, together with our contempt for knowledge, results in the fact that oral lessons & lectures pretty generally take the place of books in schools. Therefore I am grateful for the generous response parents usually make to a pretty large demand for books. But I should like

about

to say to any parents who may think that the need for such
~~not to omit it,~~
& such a book set is to leave out a link in the chain by
which all hang together. Scholars who have grown up in this
School, from class Ia to class IV, & have kept their books,
find themselves in possession of a delightful library which
is also a history of their intellectual life. The books
they used as children of six & seven, being of a literary
character, are still interesting to them when they are grown
up. ~~X~~ They know their way about many books treating of many
subjects; there are, as we know, two kinds of memory, one for
facts one for the place, page, line, of the right book which
illuminates the fact; *Mr. Letter* This is the practically useful
memory & this, ~~memory~~ these young scholars should possess.

The stimulating influence of this scholar's library, these
'hundred' best books, let us say, which have been intellectual-
ly grasped between the ages of six & eighteen, can hardly
~~not~~ fail to influence the atmosphere of the whole household
as well as that of the schoolroom party. ~~X~~ We know how
parents join the scouting expeditions, make little journeys ~~to~~
with the children in search, say, of bog-myrtle or to see

the sandpiper, have the pictures for the term framed & hung in the schoolroom (though a brown paper mount does just as well as a frame); in fact, allow themselves to be quickened in a hundred ways by the living interests of their children: & chief among these interest are, ~~we have reason to believe,~~ the 'delightful' books used in the schoolroom.

Therefore, parents must not expect to get the full benefit of the School unless they do their part by providing the books set for each programme of work. Each child should have his own books because the practice of looking on is bad for the eyes & because the sense of property in his books & of the duty & responsibility of taking care of them is no small part of education. As for the cost, we are told of a saying of Mahomet's, how that if a man had twopence (or the equivalent of twopence) he should spend one penny on bread & the other on flowers. Let us apply the same principle to books.

To speak for a moment of another matter; the parent who goes to his boy's schoolmaster & says, - I don't want my boy to learn geography, or Greek, or drawing, because he is ~~too~~

rather ~~an~~ exceptional, - is set down by the schoolmaster as a faddist. The latter may make a polite reply but is apt to murmur, sotto voce, 'that is my business now'. And he is right. It is the teacher's business to survey the wide range of subjects some knowledge of each of which is due to a child, & consider how they may be best proportioned & included. What the parent cannot undertake to do as a whole, he may not do in part; that is a way of speaking to 'the man at the wheel' which is not without risk.

The parents of delicate children are often afraid of too much mental strain & consider that when a child has nothing to do his brain is keeping holiday. Never was a greater mistake, -

"The human (brain) is like a millstone, turning ever round & round

If it have nothing else to grind, it must itself be ground,"

And the poor little chap who is sent into the garden ~~to~~ to play is really working furiously all the time. It is desultory, unorganised work which fatigues both body & brain,

while the rythmic regularity of prescribed effort is wonderfully easeful. Dostoeffsky, in describing convict life in Siberia, repeats again & again that the definite, purposeful work in which the convicts are employed is the one thing that keeps them sane & well; & one thinks of the numberless children below par as regards either mental development or bodily health who are left to prey upon themselves because they are supposed not to be strong enough for mental work. The brain, be it remembered, is a physical organ, & regular & sufficient exercise is one of the conditions which keep it in health. Brain Specialists are coming pretty unanimously to this conclusion, that all children are the better for definite mental work, while such work is a necessity for those of retarded mental development.

Another bogey occasionally lifts its head, -- that a child's intellectual labour & resultant fatigue are in proportion to the number of subjects studied. Punch, of course, knows about it. We all know that 'Miss Honeymen's', -- "Thesis for the DSc degree, with its remarkable series of curves showing in Milligrammes the precise amount of

fatigue endured by 5,875 children (male & female) varying in age from 6.329 to 7.215 years, in committing to memory the complete poem of "Mary & the Lamb", bade fair to revolutionise the whole science of Experimental Psychology!"

But as a matter of fact, a number of subjects & a variety of subjects, make for relief & refreshment & not for fatigue; the things that tire ~~children~~ a child are too long lessons & too long school-hours. By recognising this fact we are able to get in much more work than the ordinary time-table allows of because our lessons are shorter, & the children concentrate attention on what they are about. It is the constant effort to pull together ~~wits~~ that are woolgathering that fatigues child & man & not rapid work done with full interest & attention.

While speaking on the difficulties that occur here & there in the working of the school, let me say a word to console parents who may be a little troubled because their children on entering the school are launched into the middle of certain books. Of course the same thing must happen

in any school which they join because in a school children must work with their class. Now very few subjects have either beginning or end so it does not much matter where children come in so long as they alight on their feet ,&, as the cycle of work goes round in the class, they will want to use those parts of their books which they have missed. Anyway they have their books to refer to & so are better off than children who depend upon oral lessons. The practice of beginning at the beginning & trying to overtake the class in the several books is much to be deprecated & means the sort of overpressure which is fatal ,not only to progress, but to that love of knowledge for its own sake which is the best thing to be got out of school life.

I have another little request to make.

We try to order the child's school life so as to include not only many interests but also gaiety & leisure.

But mothers,especially London mothers,are so wistfully eager to secure every sort of advantage for their children that the poor little people are trotted about from class to class for biology,astronomy,singing,dancing & drawing, French & Italian, until there is no freshness,no keenness left in them.

I have not come across a child who has profited much by these various classes & I do find that children whose leisure is spent upon extra classes become rather dull & are not much interested in anything. Children must have ease, leisure, & play.

Now, may I touch upon what is really a difficult question, & that is the teaching of French. The popular way of solving the difficulty is to secure a French governess or an Englishwoman who has lived so long in France that she speaks like a native & has possibly got into the rather lax habits of mind which we are apt to fall into when we live too long apart from the responsibilities proper to our native country. We are on the horns of a dilemma. Children must learn to speak French fluently; but I believe that many of our failures in knowledge & intellectual interest are due to the pursuit of French at all costs. Now, many men have very good French but no mother would sacrifice a boy's education as she does her girl's to this single acquirement. A French under-nurse, holidays spent in France with a tutor, a few months spent in ~~XX~~XX

a French family before going to College, or a French boy or
youth as a holiday companion, ^{an excellent method} appears to answer the purpose
with a boy in addition to his school work in French. Now
I think some such supplementary opportunities might be arranged
for girls rather than that their school work should
be impeded. We take pains to send out governesses who speak
French with some fluency & correctness & who have some
knowledge of French history & literature, but I cannot say
that I think the time allotted to French will secure a thorough
knowledge of the tongue without some supplementary effort.
I have known an interchange of pupils for a few months between
French & English families to work very well & there is a very
well-worked organisation to arrange for such interchange
between families of a suitable condition in life.*
We cannot afford to sacrifice our girls' education to French
as our grandmothers did, & though I know that many French
governesses are admirable teachers, I think a word of caution
may be of use.

P *Miss Williams, Franco-English Guide, Rue de la Sorbonne, Paris

Parents are sometimes in doubt as to how long their girls should be in the school; as to the boys, there is no question, every boy should go to a preparatory school by ~~ten~~ at the very latest however good the work he may be doing in the P.U.S. ^{however} Girls, again, of a certain class do not go to school & remain with us until they are, say, 18. The work in the fourth class (from 15-18) is exceedingly interesting & delightful, qualifying a woman for family & social duties & for service to the world. Lady Campbell will kindly read a few of the questions set in the last examination paper for class ~~IV~~, that ~~with the~~ you may judge how far a girl who has done the work is equipped ^{interested & equipped} with knowledge, principles to guide her in life & joy in living.

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Many parents, on the other hand, like their girls to go to school at 14 or 15 that they may make friends & see a little of the school world. It is sometimes urged against this that a girl loses more than she gains by being removed from [the interests of the home-life] & especially from intercourse with her father. I think myself that school discipline is wholesome but that it would be very difficult to make up for the educative value of the class IV curriculum. A good many schools~~s~~ are, however, doing our work admirably & it might be possible for parents either to make use of these schools or to urge the taking up of this work in the schools to which they send their daughters. P The fact that we are marking the attainment of the School's majority in this happy Winchester week gives me the opportunity to 'talk of many things'. Many girls have been brought up & thousands of boys & girls have had some part of their education with us. I believe there is a lady present who has been for 20 years a member of the school & still her children are working happily & successfully while those who are launched upon various careers are doing very well indeed.

indeed. Girls who have become mothers, men who have taken their degrees, still, I believe, cherish affectionate remembrance of their old school which ^{never} until now has taken on the definiteness of visible numbers. We believe the P.U.S. has not existed in vain.

It is abstract as distinct from utilitarian knowledge for which I think children acquire a real love in this School; & as many of the members belong to what are called the governing classes, I think it possible that England may receive from your children a great impetus towards the pursuit of that knowledge, to the lack of which many of our failures as a nation may be traced.

"A highly practical spirit is founded on abstract knowledge", we are told, & we who are practical, if anything are rapidly finding ourselves outdone by a nation which puts knowledge first & takes practical aptitude as a consequence of abstract knowledge, that is, knowledge of Divinity, the Humanities, art & literature, history, history, ethics etc.) & Science. We covet earnestly the best gifts, not that we may excel or equal any other people but because, - "We would indeed be somewhat as Thou art,

Not spring, & bud , & flower, & fade , & fall--
Not fix our intellects on some scant part
Of Nature, -but enjoy or feel it all:
We would assert the privilege of a soul,
In that it knows, to understand the ~~whole~~.
if such things are within us - God is good -
And flight is destined for the callow wing,-
And the high appetite implies the food,-
And souls must ~~not~~ reach the level whence they spring!
O LIFE of very LIFE! set free our Powers,
Hasten the travail of the yearning hours."

Houghton.